

Exhibit E

- b. The date and place of each incorporation or formation;
- c. The address of each principal place of business; and
- d. The Board members and executive officers.

ANSWER: Subject to and without waiving her forgoing rights and objections, plaintiff refers defendant to her answers to Interrogatories Nos. 6-9.

RESPONSES TO REQUEST TO PRODUCE DOCUMENTS

Request No. 1: All written agreements and/or contracts by and between the plaintiff, SCORES HOLDING COMPANY, INC. (hereinafter "SCORES HOLDING") and GO WEST ENTERTAINMENT, INC. (hereafter "SCORES WEST SIDE") at any time during the period from January 1, 2005, up to and including December 31, 2007.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not in possession of any documents responsive to this request and further identifies that any such agreements or contracts executed by plaintiff were collected and retained by defendants.

Request No. 2: Copies of all written correspondence by and between plaintiff and SCORES HOLDING and SCORES WEST SIDE during the period from January 1, 2005, up to and including December 31, 2007.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff does not recall having any written correspondence responsive to this request nor is she in the possession of such correspondence.

Request No. 3: Copies of any and all periodic paystubs, W-2 forms and/or 1099 forms ever received by plaintiff from either SCORES HOLDING or SCORES WEST SIDE at any time during the period from January 1, 2005, up to and including December 31, 2007.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any documents responsive to this request and further identifies that they may be in the possession of defendants pursuant to mandatory notice and recordkeeping requirements.

Request No. 4: Copies of all W-2 forms and/or 1099 forms received by plaintiff during the calendar years 2005, 2006 and 2007.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any W2 or 1099 forms responsive to this request and further identifies that she worked through the United Kingdom.

Request No. 5: Copies of any and all employment agreements or independent contractor agreements signed by plaintiff with adult entertainment establishments during the calendar years 2005, 2006 and 2007.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any agreements responsive to this request and further identifies that any such executed agreements were collected and retained by said establishments.

Request No. 6: Any records kept by the plaintiff showing the days, hours and times worked by plaintiff at SCORES WEST SIDE at any time during the period from January 1, 2005, up to and including December 31, 2007.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any documents directly responsive to this request but refers defendants to her answer to Interrogatory No.13 above. Plaintiff further identifies that the documents directly responsive to this request should be in defendants' possession pursuant to mandatory notice and recordkeeping requirements. To the extent that related or applicable records may be found in Plaintiff's Mimi in New York blog postings between September 2005 through December 2005, Plaintiff refers defendants to the blog postings annexed hereto as Exhibit A.

Request No. 7: Copies of any records received or kept by the plaintiff showing the hours and dates plaintiff worked at any adult nightclub establishments during the calendar years 2005, 2006 and 2007.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any documents responsive to this request and further identifies that the only related records she has, to the extent they are applicable, are those found in her Mimi in New York blog postings.

Request No. 8: Copies of any and all complaints of sexual harassment in written form filed by the plaintiff with either SCORES WEST SIDE or any other adult entertainment nightclub at which plaintiff was employed as an exotic dancer from 2002 to the present.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any documents responsive to this request.

Request No. 9: A copy of all Police Department reports filed by the plaintiff reporting incidents of sexual harassment or assault or battery upon the plaintiff or her person from 2002 to the present.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any documents responsive to this request.

Request No. 10: Copies of any and all legal actions commenced by the plaintiff during the period from January 1, 2002 up to the present date seeking either the same or similar relief or damages as sought by the plaintiff in the above entitled action.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any documents responsive to this request and identifies that she has not commenced any legal actions aside from this instant action since January 1, 2002 to date.

Request No. 11: Copies of any and all complaints filed by the plaintiff herein complaining of sexual discrimination and/or hostile work environment with the New York State Division of Human Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the New York City Human Rights Commission and any other governmental agency during the years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any documents responsive to this request and identifies that she has not filed any discrimination complaints with the aforementioned agencies.

Request No. 12: Copies of all bills for prescribed drugs and medical or hospital treatments for any injuries plaintiff claims she received while working as a dancer at SCORES WEST SIDE where it is claimed that such injuries resulted from the unwelcome touching, grabbing and/or groping of her body, forced kissing and forced engagement of sexual acts with the supervisors and/or managers of SCORES WEST SIDE. Also, copies of any canceled checks and/or credit card statements evidencing payments for any such medical or hospital treatment or prescribed drugs.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any documents responsive to this request and further identifies that she was not taking any medication or medical treatment during her employment

with defendants.

Request No. 13: Copies of all bills of prescribed drugs and medicine or hospital treatments to treat the bruising of plaintiff's face caused by one of the managers of SCORES WEST SIDE who smeared a steak all over plaintiff's face.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff refers defendants to her foregoing response.

Request No. 14: Copies of all written correspondence by and between plaintiff and the nightclub's lawyer.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not currently in possession of any documents responsive to this request.

Request No. 15: Copies of any and all complaints and/or claims filed by the plaintiff herein alleging violations of the New York Labor Laws.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is not in possession of any documents responsive to this request alleging violation of the New York Labor Laws aside from any allegations set forth in this instant action.

Request No. 16: Copies of all books, stories and articles plaintiff has written about the adult entertainment industry from 2002 to the present.

RESPONSE: Subject to and without waiving her foregoing rights and objections, plaintiff is refers defendants to the blog postings, stories and articles annexed hereto in Exhibits A through F. Plaintiff further identifies that she will provide defendants with a copy of her book at a later date under separate cover.

Dated: New York, New York
June 7, 2010

Respectfully Submitted,

LEVINE & BLIT, PLLC

Matthew J. Blit, Esq. (MJB 4145)

Empire State Building
350 Fifth Avenue, 36th Floor

**PLAINTIFF'S
RESPONSE
EXHIBITS A-F**

**AS PART OF
DEFENDANT'S
EXHIBIT E**

EXHIBIT A

Report Abuse Next Blog»

Create Blog Sign In



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2005

Bienvenidos a Los Estados Unidos

Adorno, dear Adorno, beckons me forward and motions to the red light sensor on the desk.
Index finger.

"So, you're like a journalist?"

"Yeah"

"Whatya do? Whatya write about?"

"Sex, sex trafficking, illegal immigrants, blogs... that kind of thing."

"Dangerous huh?"

"Yeah. I had a Diplomat from the British Embassy try and get me into a foursome in exchange for information yesterday. But sometimes it's fun. I worked in a strip club in Manhattan for a long time, wrote about that."


"Like, undercover shit! Spy stuff! That's cool. Put your other index finger down."

"Done?"

"Yeah, done. Welcome to the United States of America. Lemme know when that article about stripping comes out. I'm gonna be looking out for that one. And you take care, you hear me? Sounds dangerous."

Adorno, dear Adorno, gives me a sweet grin and waves me off, down to baggage reclaim, yellow cabs, the unexpected cool of a September evening, the solace of a city I know, anonymity, routine. Back to dancing tomorrow.

Welcome to the United States of America.

MIMI IN NY | 10:06 AM | 

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2005

The Diplomat

The second course arrives. Beef, very expensive. Imported. Like the champagne and the tequila. The Maid hovers anxiously until The Diplomat gives her a curt little nod, and then breaks into guffaws. "She's so fucking stupid. Doesn't even know what a fucking fork is." The fountain tinkles eerily in the background. From the dining table I can see the Lotus, the Merc and the Ducati nestling next to a cage containing two tiny, miserable spider monkeys, huddling together like little old men. Second course ends. The Maid brings the dessert (imported). The Diplomat pours out four shots of tequila (very expensive) and beams genially. His eyes bulge slightly, and roll around in his head.

"Where did you find this girl?" He asks Sean excitedly. "A stripper journalist! It's just too much fun! It's too, too much!" He descends into a sea of giggles which verge on the hysterical, falls off his chair, giggles, and disappears into the depths of his colonial mansion. The Maid hovers anxiously. The guests exchange glances. The Diplomat reappears clutching a sheath of

o newyorkmimi@gmail.com
o Facebook
o RSS

47 countries, 12 boats, hundreds of flights, a century of assholes and four years later... Living in LA, writing for The Guardian, still pissing off the religious-right.

"She should be a huge public success, as sociopathic narcissists so often are." The Guardian



FAMOUS WEBSITE
AWARD



Recent Entries

In Defense of Hookers
No one Ever Really Dies
Two New HuffPo Pieces
Shiloh Jolie-Pitt: Shameless
Cross-Dresser
HuffPo
Back in Venice
More, Mange
Mr Chips' Mange Update
Mr Chips' Mange
Celebrity - Hollywood's Crack
Habit?

Archives

March 2005
April 2005
May 2005
June 2005
July 2005
August 2005
September 2005
October 2005
November 2005
December 2005
January 2006
February 2006
March 2006
April 2006
May 2006
June 2006

papers and a Marlboro Light.

"Here, Mimi, is confidential information from the embassy." He removes the papers and spreads them out across the huge oak table, pushing away crystal champagne glasses, fine bone china, silver tableware. His cigarette dangles from his lip, ash dribbles onto the varnished floor, his eyes roll frenziedly around in his head. He looks at me, giggles, and his bulging pale eyes, framed by white lashes, darken.

"It's not *free*, this information. These papers are *very expensive*."


A pause, smile, a lizard smile.

"In fact, they're probably worth about as much as you'd get in the strip club."

He caresses the papers gently with his hands, thin, pale, blonde hairs covering his fingers, sneaking up his wrists, disappearing into his Versace shirt (imported, very expensive).

"They're probably worth a little lap dance, perhaps some... *entertainment* for us all."

The papers lie in front of me. Ash trickles onto a page, delicate, like snow. The fountain tinkles eerily in the background. The monkeys chirp sadly. Outside, it has started to rain.

MIMI IN NY | 10:53 AM | 

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2005

se vende su futura

Sean leans over and takes my hand and looks at it sadly, absently rubbing his coarse fingers over the remnants of a flaking french manicure.

"Mimi, be careful girl. The last journalist who tried to do this story went missing. They never found him."

In the rotting segments of a shanty town I pick my way through dogs with ribs like runway models, trash and moulding food piled up against the walls of shacks, an ever encroaching virus choking the attempts at humanity, an insidious disease - poverty. In the midst - a huge, concrete fortress, the sounds of children playing. I ring the bell. An emaciated dog with a pustulous sore boiling from its head sniffs at my foot. It hacks up something. Inspects it. Devours. Buzzed in.

Quise ser un niño, y no me dejaron

I wanted to be a child, and they would not let me.

On the walls of the institute are row upon row of street children killed by the police, by unknown murderers, by disease. Grainy sepia pictures of children with huge, empty eyes smiling shyly, uncertainly at the camera, staring sadly, vacantly. I'm ushered into a clean, airy office by a small, stout man with merry eyes, a father's face. Preliminaries, introductions. He does not speak English, and I stumble over my stale Spanish, but we understand one another perfectly.

"You must understand. I'm a Human Rights Lawyer. I can't give you the names and numbers of those involved."

But you can ask others, the wording is implicit. Héctor works alongside Marielos Monsón, assisting the journalists of Guatemala to produce the stories the government tries to suppress. He was a *compañero* of Harold Rafael Perez, another prominent Human Rights lawyer, until Perez was gunned down in Guatemala City two weeks ago. They live under threat and fear. News filters out, but what's more important? Human Rights Violations in Guatemala? Kate Moss snorting coke in London? You judge, because I can't, not any more, not for your eyes. I judge only within myself.

The atmosphere's thick in the tiny office, warm, deceptively clean and safe. I stare into

July 2006
August 2006
September 2006
October 2006
January 2007
May 2007
June 2007
July 2007
August 2007
September 2007
October 2007
November 2007
December 2007
January 2008
February 2008
March 2008
April 2008
May 2008
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December 2008
January 2009
March 2009
June 2009
July 2009
October 2009
December 2009
January 2010
February 2010
March 2010
April 2010



Hector's eyes, because his words, elegant Spanish, belie what I see there. It's a delicate waltz between what one says, what one reads in the eyes, in the sigh, the unguarded look, slipped comment. He's a good man. Death threats most days. They're used to that, the journalists, the lawyers.

In the organization are attorneys from the US, law students, volunteers. They can talk freely whilst Guatemalans must speak only with what they don't say, or can't. Kathy, an attorney from LA, looks up at me from a mound of papers.

"Why the *fuck* is no one covering this shit? Why is the New York Times not putting this on the front page? If this was America it'd be everywhere."

She pauses and laughs dryly.

"But it's not like we helped them out any. I'm ashamed to be American."

My life whirls before my eyes. I came to New York for the good life, for cocktails and Prada bags, for a comfortable apartment, a salary, security, a good looking man, wrapping myself up in the blanket softness of the first world, blocking out the past, claiming what the world owed me.


I became an illegal. I became a sex worker. My writing became more than I ever intended. I wanted to write sharp, edgy vignettes of poisonous humor. But my understanding deepened. What the world owed me was what I owed to myself. To use the skills I have to shed light on areas, people, politics. I am an adolescent journalist, still striking out in this field. But I am an expert on life, a *compañero* of suffering, because I have seen it every day from the unique vantage point life gave me. I always felt cursed for being an illegal, for gyrating around a pole whilst my peers enjoyed their six figure salaries, their lazy Sunday mornings, their impenetrable circles of friendship, family. But what I've learned, experienced, I would not exchange with anyone.

I'm a dancer, no, I'm a stripper. I'm a journalist. I'm a writer. I'm proud of the struggle, I would not want Martinis and Chanel bags, perfectly manicured fingers, a romantic cliché of living. I always wanted to write fiction, and instead I find there's too much in life I need to record. *We can't categorise you, says my agent. You haven't found your voice yet. Write something people feel safe with. Write Sex and the City. Write funny, write sad, write serious, write fiction.*

On the contrary, I feel I have found my voice. I write it all. The incongruity of these pages detail the incongruity of life, its inability to be categorised, packaged, as if it were an episode of *Sex and the City*, a sweet, pretty vignette of prose. Comic, dry, sarcastic, serious, romantic, edgy, rough, raw, punctuated by mistakes, emotion, too much, too little, overwhelmingly imperfect. My words, my life, are a journal of mistakes, small victories. It's life. It's for the majority who don't live in the Meatpacking district in the apartment Daddy paid for. It's not intended to shock, repulse, alienate - although I know it does.

I wanted to be a child and they would not let me.

If you want aesthetics, leave now. But if you're still here, reading this, aesthetics was never what you desired, was it?


MIMI IN NY | 10:58 AM | 

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2005

The Dinosaur

When I woke up the dinosaur was still there.

Augusto Monterroso

MIMI IN NY | 10:00 PM | 

Welcome to Earth Lodge

Welcome to Earth Lodge says the sign, and despite fear of dreadlocked hippies, guitars and innumerable renditions of 'Hotel California', I step into the beat up old VW Beetle and heave my backpack onto the roof. A strange creature wearing goggles beams at me.

"Ah gotta ten pound hunk o' cow fer the fire tonight," he informs me. *Faaahhhr*. "Lemme tell you 'bout when ah was in 'Nam back in..."

The beat up old Beetle shudders and hacks its way up a sheer dirt road, winding paths trickling like veins through the forest, and we arrive, a half-hour later, at a small clearing, pockmarked by miniature avocado trees and wooden shacks. I turn around and Guatemala spreads before me like butter, green, lush, peaceful. The volcano puffs gently, little gusts of ash and larva, grumbles in the distance, a belly waiting to disgorge. That was in January.

I went back, of course I went back. Changed though, from New York. I am Charlotte Sim... No, I am Mimi, of course, of course. Devon, a Canadian who lives in a tree house, welcomes me back with a hug. "So, your name's Mimi now?" I nod, and suddenly feel tears crawling up through my throat, swallow them down, nod again. "We read your blog! Briana's Dad called us up. He was like, 'you know there's a stripper left a message on the website?'" He laughs and looks curious, we're all curious about the strange girl with the sweet face who takes her clothes off for a living while the rest of privileged, rich Manhattan sigh over their lack of men, their new shoes.

I was once a good girl, a studious girl, polite. Manners are for the rich though, the privileged who indulge in the lies we entertain every day. Manhattan cares about only the successful, it sniffs failure and moves on, remorselessly casting its eye to the future, a grinding, ruthless wheel. I avoid writing about designer clothes, dates, celebrities. Quirky, they call me. Hard. Yes it's true. But for now I'm welcomed to Earth Lodge, where no one questions you, prerequisites for entry: ability to do nothing. We do nothing, slouch in hammocks, we are drifters, we drifted from our own countries and we found our way here, chameleons, we'll adapt to survive...


Simon is tending to the Lodge while Drew and Briana, the owners, vacation in Mexico. Simon, originally from Switzerland, used to be a clown, teaching Guatemalans about AID's and HIV. He smiles happily and swigs on a brown, sturdy bottle of beer.

"The red nose, it can go places others can't. We can't talk to Guatemalans about sex. They'd get embarrassed. But the clown can."

Simon's 21 month old son, Leo, waddles up and pounces on a butterfly. He shreds it and gurgles happily. Butterfly wings lie in pieces on the floor, confetti. *Welcome to Earth Lodge*, and I feel welcomed. The temperature drops as night and cloud and cold creeps in, drifting lightly into the kitchen, chilling, cool. We stoke up the sauna with wood and crawl into its clay belly and I sweat the remnants of Manhattan out, the filth of a city which doesn't care, which makes you hard. And I emerge softer, warmer, cleansed. We eat vegetarian food and the mist throngs the mountain, and we all act as if we know each other, even if we don't, because we're travellers, and we're used to it. There are no strangers, we are all strangers. On the mountain it's irrelevant, meaningless, politics, hurricanes, dating, even sex. There's a sign, under 'coffee - 6 quetzales', there are 'Condoms - 8 quetzales'. I don't think anyone's getting any tonight. Sexless on the mountain. Sex is my living, and now I am on vacation. I leave that behind in Manhattan. I am who I was before. Just a little bit stronger, a little bit wiser, a little harder. I sleep well, in the Lodge, a hard wooden bunk, stiff, scratchy blankets, the gentle light of a candle. I leave fitful behind, and I wake up and play with Leo, who shrieks and chases butterflies, and Simon laughs, and Devon slouches in a hammock, and the little local girl who works in the kitchen smiles shyly. When I leave I feel like crying, and it's a clean feeling, good. Welcome to Earth Lodge. Yes, I am and was. And knowing I always will be makes the return to Manhattan a little easier. I am Char... No, I am Mi... No, for now, I am who I was before. Just stronger.

I'll post pictures from the Lodge at the end of the week. For the meantime - do visit, either

virtually or in person. They're fantastic, warm people doing a lot for the local community.

MIMI IN NY | 5:14 PM | 

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2005

Brits on Tour

"...I need a fucking beer. I have to get up at five o'clock in the fucking morning to start this voluntary work. Oh my God, is this a fucking *chicken* burger? I ordered a cheeseburger. Fucking waiter."

"You ordered a chicken burger."

"I know what I fucking said and it wasn't a fucking chicken burger for fuck's sake. Oh God I need another beer. *Hombre! Mas Gallo!*"

Julia, who works in HR, a wrinkled, paper thin creature with blue veins trickling through her transparent skin, attempts placation.

"Isn't it all nice! Brits all together! We can have a jolly good time just talking about England when we're all so far away!"

I start to remember, vaguely, with a sense of paralyzing horror, why exactly I left the UK five years ago.

"HOMBRE! MORE BEER!"

"She's usually very bubbly," whispers Julia conspiratorially. A vein pulses slightly through her crepey skin. "Perhaps she's menstruating." A loud cheer erupts at the end of the bar as the Yankees score. The Guatemalans sit in one corner and look serenely on, sipping their Gallo beer, eyes glazed, impassive, smiles of amusement flickering unobtrusively across their mouths.


"BEER?"

It is the mating call of the English, that implacable bond between Brit and Beer which displaces all social etiquette, a call which, if unanswered, echoes wildly in the smokey atmosphere of the bar and can cause unrest, irritation... and eventually malevolent, insatiable fury.

"BEERI!"

Julia twitters anxiously. Our small Guatemalan waiter appears with Medea's beer. She eyes him as if she would like to devour him with her yellowing English canines, ripping his flesh greedily from the bones. He slips eagerly away.

"I ordered a fucking chicken burger," she mutters, just as the Yankees score again, and the Americans shriek in joy, and the Guatemalans sit blithely, calmly, impassively sipping their Gallo beer.

MIMI IN NY | 12:57 PM | 

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2005

laissez les bons temps rouler

"Where are you goink?" demands Rudolf, affronted. "You must wait for me. I am having ze meal wiz you."

I prepare my tongue for the Manhattan curses ready to ripple off effortlessly like a wave, when the rattle of Guatemalan voices brings me down to the sodden, slippery cobbled earth with a bump. Sarah, the English girl in my dorm, worthy of my company only because she has resisted the urge for hemp clothing, dreadlocks and tolerates me, shrugs and motions me to

be quiet. We roll our eyes, and English to the core, patiently and silently wait for Rudolf to finish IM-ing his girlfriend, Helga, back in Germany, whilst simultaneously re-running the theme tune to 'The Great Escape' through our heads.

The problem with travelling is proximity to the odd, the stupid and the hygienically challenged. Manhattan has taught me well. Manhattan has taught me the exquisite beauty of intolerance. Manhattan has eradicated any vestige of olde worlde English charm that I may once have possessed. I met Ady for a drink the other day. He looked tired and sad. I told him so, and he spent five minutes indignantly berating me for observing this fact. I was puzzled, until I realized that he was English. Of course, the *English*, reserved and polite, following the intricate dance of a social etiquette few can comprehend. We can call each other cunts, but god forbid we observe a few dark shadows under the eyes. Once upon a time, that was me. And now I barge into places where no one wants me with the tact and éclat of the Manhattanite. Which is to say, with no tact, no éclat and a complete disregard for lesser beings (tr. everyone else).

Today I gracefully declined the tempting offer of breakfast with Rudolf, and went to the US embassy to interview the Guatemalans lining its steel borders, clutching their DS156 forms, their birth certificates, their pristine photographs smoothed between layers of tissue paper, their cheques made out to God, good luck and the United States of America. Hopes wrapped in tissue paper, futures typed in bureaucratic code. I spoke to Ramón, a 45 year old father of four who works as an electrical engineer in the city. He and his wife want to take their children to Orlando for a two week vacation.

"It is difficult. They want to know that you are not going to stay illegally. You must prove you have property in Guatemala, a job, savings, ties here. If not they will say no."

How does the average Guatemalan afford the fee for a visa application, currently 100 dollars, never mind the cost of a ticket to the US?

"My wife and I, we have good jobs. But still, it is hard to save. 100 dollars here is a lot of money, and we must pay for each of our children."

Ramón used to be in the guerillas. He remembers the Civil War vividly and looks away gruffly when I bring it up.

"Many friends died. They were tortured. They used Machetes on people. Guns. You had no idea who was your friend, who was not."

After the War, many Guatemalan refugees who had fled to California were deported back to their country. No one blames the gringo. They do not like him overly, but can one blame a man for the actions of his government?

"People want to come to the US to live because it is not good for us in Guatemala. Me, I am OK. I have a good job. My wife too. But others? They cannot live here. Their lives were ruined. They want new lives."

There are two queues thronging the embassy. One for those applying for Legal Permanent Residency - comprised of, perhaps, 15 or so people, those fortunates with relatives legally residing in the States. Others, 200 plus, are applying for the Business or Tourist Visa - the B1/B2 - that those countries not included in the visa waiver program need to cross into the US. It is ironic that richer countries (Britain, Canada, France etc) get in for free, those in the Third World must pay to enter. Has Ramón ever considered moving to the US? He looks uncomfortable.

"No, no. Some of these people will over-stay their visas. Most will come back. But I have never wanted to live in the States. Maybe Great Britain. I heard that in Great Britain we are not discriminated against, that blacks are equal."

I give Ramón a website address providing information on immigrating to Britain, knowing that he will never try. Very few can ever bring themselves to leave the comfort of the known without family connections already intact in the future-host country.


Around the embassy an empire of business opportunity has developed. Coffee, tea, tortillas.

pan dulce and sandwiches are dispensed with efficient ease by a small pre-pubescent girl for one or two quetzales. A man hawks umbrellas to shelter against the grey drizzle. Three more men care for your electronic items and cigarettes whilst in the embassy for another fee, items forbidden past the imposing metal gates. Photo booths are open from 6am in the morning onwards, and Experts on 'how to fill out your visa form' hover, ready to offer invaluable advice in exchange for a quetzal, a cigarette, a smile. They grin more readily when I inform them that I am English, and tell me they love Manchester United.

The visa applicants hover nervously in their best clothes as shoe shine boys run eagerly around. It is 8am. Some of these people have been waiting since 5am. I wonder how many will get their visas. How many will arrive in the promised land. How many will have to go through the long, lonely months of adjusting to a new country, whether legally or illegally. Here, Ramón and his family are privileged, at the top of their social class. Should he stay in the US past his visa stamp, he will become one of the nameless, the faceless, another Hispanic immigrant hoping for no more than manual labor, cash in hand, the lowest class in a new society, trying to bring his children up the right way, forging opportunities so that his children do not struggle to pay a hundred dollar visa fee.

I hop into a brightly painted chicken bus called Dorita next to a tiny, shrivelled woman with a nut-brown walnut face, and set off back to Antigua. The visa line shuffles anxiously forward. Sometimes I want to see the end of the story when I find it.

And sometimes, as the rain drifts down and the country melds into brown and green and grey, I don't. It's too sad, and I feel I already know it.

MIMI IN NY | 2:35 PM | 

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2005

Freedom and Democracy

Freedom and Democracy. It's what we all want, right? It's the best way to go about things, *our* way. Yet in 1954, when the first democratically elected President of Guatemala, Jacobo Arbenz, was overthrown by a CIA directed coup, freedom and democracy were replaced by a 35 year civil war. The reason for the coup? United Fruit and Coca Cola company got scared after Arbenz came up with a plan to alleviate poverty and put power back in the hands of the Guatemalan people. He planned a programme of compulsory purchase of land, so that it would come back under State ownership - not American corporations. The UFCO had a monopoly on Guatemala's economy, carrying exclusive rights to the railroad, telegraph system and all the major ports. It had no intention of relinquishing this, and put pressure on the CIA to help. The US trained a group of eager Guatemalan exiles, and a bloody coup ensued. A military dictator was assisted to take over the government, followed by a string of right wing military leaders. This was followed in the 1970's and 80's by a war against Guatemalan trade unions. A war launched by a US-owned bottling company licensed to Coca-Cola.

Quiet, non-violent resistance grew - as did guerilla insurgency groups adopting Marxist principles. The government responded in 1982 by systematic destruction. Villages were rounded up. Women and children raped. Crops and whole tracts of land burnt in the 'scorched earth programme'. Genocide ensued against the Mayan indigenous people. The State was responsible for over 90% of human rights violations recorded. They were trained, throughout this period, by the USA, who provided arms and equipment to the government. I spoke to many Mayans who still remember the horror of those times, the persistent torture, the fear of death carried, it seemed, in the wind, in the air they hardly dared breath. In San Pedro, two families who worked with the Guatemalan Intelligence Unit against their own people still survived, outcast by the community. One woman leaned in towards me and whispered, "The campesinos came for one man, and he was hiding under the floorboards. His wife lied, said he wasn't there. They found him, hiding like a child, a pathetic child. They say the bloody handprints of his victims were all over the bathroom wall". Man pitted against man. No one knew who was with the government (predominantly of European origin), who was with their fellow Mayans.

The US policy of introducing 'freedom and democracy' into countries across the world has fostered an atmosphere in which fear, unrest and eventually civil war can erupt. In Iraq the US

army trains the Iraqis by day, and by night their own training is used against them, at the same time as unrest between Sunnis and Shi'ites reaches a frenetic boiling point and threatens to bubble over into - yes, Civil War. More death, more destruction, another unpopular leader placed in power by the US. In Syria, The US is placing increasing pressure on the opposition to replace Assad with a democratically elected government of their own choosing, should Assad refuse to 'toe their line'. Yet should they remove Assad, it is doubtful that the power vacuum would be filled peacefully by just another US puppet. Assad's uncle Rifaat is waiting eagerly in the wings to step into his place. In 1982 Rifaat was responsible for the deaths of 20,000 in the city of Hama. Should Syria not prove "smart enough to take (the) course" intended for them by the US, it is likely that the US will *not* be smart enough to see that more meddling will produce a further catastrophe in a country too far away for us in the West to care about.


Yesterday, USA Today quoted from a report by a Washington Think Tank - The Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"Most extremists caught by Saudi authorities trying to enter Iraq to join the fighting weren't militants before the US-led war...85% were not on a government watch list or known to be Al-Qaeda members. Instead they were 'radicalized almost exclusively by the coalition invasion of Iraq'."

I walk the streets of Antigua, Guatemala, the memories of the genocide still fresh, yet hidden beneath a new generation ignorant of their elders' pain. American tourists wander around clutching their Spanish phrasebooks, tripping over cobbled stones. The sky is overcast, clouded by dank mists of humidity thronging the volcanoes and mountains. Natural beauty conceals the memories of the past. No one yells at the American tourists, no one blames them outwardly, yet the American reputation abroad has suffered, and Americans are regarded with contempt, suspicion, dislike, universally held to account for the actions of their government. The US hasn't suffered overly despite its appalling history of wrongdoing, its desire to protect corporate interests, its belief in the totality of its veracity. 9/11 was just a hint for most US citizens of the fear and hatred stirred by US foreign policy. Most believe it to be jealousy of their democracy, a desire to destroy this. The American people are, on the whole, unconscious to this tiny, green mountainous country where the inhabitants still speak their local Mayan dialect, where Spanish is still the language of the colonizer, where once their administration nurtured a terrifying regime which resulted in the deaths of thousands. Life is simple here. The effects of the genocide, the meddling, the confusion, the hatred, are still felt though, even today.

If Guatemala's 35 years, if Iraq, if the future of Syria, if Vietnam, The Dominican Republic, Chile.... if all these and more, are freedom and democracy, what is left of human decency?

I was wrong. Americans don't like taking it up the ass. If the actions of their government are anything to judge them by, they just like giving it.

MIMI IN NY | 3:23 PM | 

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2005

Sex Talk in The Comfort Diner

"Americans love it up the arse," says my English friend, chomping on sweet potato fries. "I worry sometimes about those girls who can just slip it up and go at it like rabbits on heat."

I take a sip of my cappuccino as Abdul the waiter hovers nearby with various culinary accoutrement. "Why's that?"

English friend looks contemplative.

"You have to realize Mimi. The sphincter muscle is a delicate creature. At the age of 65 most of these girls are going to be in nappies. Have you ever heard a loosened up sphincter fart? It doesn't sound right! It's too saggy! It's been stretched beyond redemption!"

Seeing as English friend is not planning on becoming intimately acquainted (in the emotional sense) with the vast array of American anuses on offer, I point out that the chance that he will


still be in contact with said loosened sphincter 30 years down the line is suitably remote. Therefore all guilt should be eliminated. If they're such nice girls they'll find good husbands to change their old person nappies and put up with stained sheets anyway. And he, obviously, should keep his anal loving for outside the marital bed.

Sex talk and food is comforting. I'm constantly astounded by the levels of perversion of the general public. I thought it was just me. American girls have a confusing reputation according to my English friends. Dirty sluts when in the sack, but getting them in there proves challenging. Prior to a third date there is guilt involved and resentful looks that sex preceded cunnilingus. As well there might be.

Speaking of old person nappies I had an unfortunate incident yesterday. I flew to Miami to catch a flight to my mystery destination. I missed the second flight due to Ole Rita, and so was put up in the Miami Hilton free of charge - minus my bag and the accompanying female hygiene requirements. I called Housekeeping and requested some tampons, and was delivered some antiquated briquettes comprised of cotton and breeze-block. I had to bleed into an old person nappy for the entire 24 hours I was deprived of my luggage. Was it a *sign*? Should I desist in my anal activities, perhaps even re-route bowel movements to a different hole and give my orifices a rest?

Now I'm at my destination, Central America somewhere. I waved goodbye to Rita in the caribbean and left a wet and windy Florida behind this morning... I'll keep you guessing as to my exact location, but I'll be around to update the blog and keep you all posted.

And yes, I *am* a real person, and everything that you read is true. Thanks to all the emails asking me this! Is my life really so exciting?

MIMI IN NY | 4:30 PM | 

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2005

Before I go...

My Dad calls to inform me that he and my mother are making a trip to England for my Grandmother's 80th birthday.

"Does she still have those ratty little Yorkshire terrier dogs?" I enquire.

My Dad's voice, thick with scouse, rumbles across the crackling line.


"Oh no love. Dey all died. Did I tell you what 'appened to the last one? Started 'aving funny turns. Twitching, fits, you know. So your Nanna t'ought dat maybe the dog 'ad a 'eart condition, got out her angina spray, and gave it a puff."

"Did it work?"

"No. Dog dropped dead. Your Nanna was everso upset."

There's a pause as we contemplate the tragic and untimely passing of my Grandmother's rodent-like canine, her only companion in life, faithful to the end.

My Dad snickers cruelly. I laugh until coffee comes out of my nose.

MIMI IN NY | 2:12 PM | 

Bonding with the Bitches

I read a post today where someone said they had loved my writing until they discovered I was a stripper. I thought that odd, someone could judge me for *not* being afraid to be naked. How strange. Surely a desirable trait in anyone? Did that person keep their clothes on whilst having sex? Look away while masturbating? Self-flagellate when undressing? When I was at Cambridge, one of my best friends had dated a stripper at Stringfellows. I remember meeting

her and being overawed. She seemed so... *normal*. I stood in the mirror for hours staring at my body afterwards. Could I ever do that? I called up Peter Stringfellow's PR. Could I work for one night and do a story on it for Varsity?

They said no after I sent the picture through.

I worked out after that. And never gave it another thought until I came to NY. Thinner. Toned. And blonde.


And now I'm one of them. I worked tonight. Slow, slow, slow. We drank, we bonded. *Oh my god, someone tried that on you? Me too!*

I love girls who work in clubs. We know how to have fun. Some are prostitutes. We don't judge them for it. It's their choice. We get by without. I sat and spoke to one girl tonight who charges 1,000 bucks for a dinner date. Never fucks them, just dinner and conversation. It's not about career, looks, intelligence. In the club it's about survival. Not being screwed over. Enjoying the dance. Looking out for your friends. I'm a talker. I have fun with the guys. And I get the girls who look out for me money. I look after them. The ones who don't - I fuck them over. I was once a good girl, a kind girl, a nice girl, and life made me cruel. New York taught me the score. The girls teach me too. And in return I sell them, and myself.

And yes, sometimes I love it. I'm on stage, the little fat clever girl's gone. It's me, my tits and I.

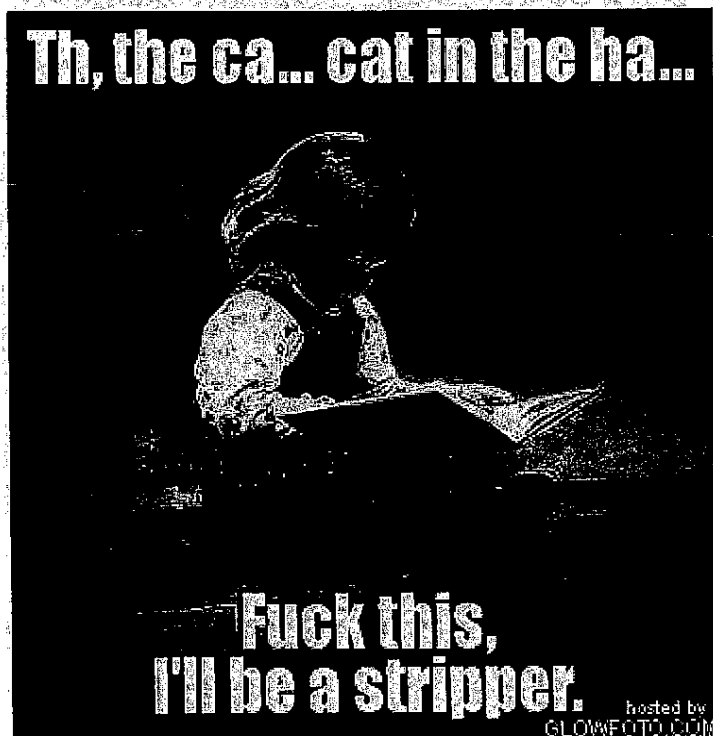
Hedonism. The one place where the jagged edges are filed smoothly, efficiently away.


I love it.

MIMI IN NY | 2:45 AM | 

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2005

Fuck This



MIMI IN NY | 6:10 PM | 

The M-A-F-I-A

You have no idea what I'm talkin' about. How could you? Sitting in front of HBO, doin' your Friday night shit. 'Cause every time you try judge me, life fucks up in your face. I work in the club tonight and I am good. I beat every fucking blonde haired, big-titted strippper bitch and I make it to The Champagne Room within 30 minutes. One guy sat there for an hour and out of thirty girls chose one. I made it. I got the fuckin' cash. And I earn it. I work the floor, I make money, then I get the call: "Mimi to the dresssing room". I go and the owner is there. THE OWNER. You get that small town? A multi-million dollar franchise, and the owner wants to speak to me.

"You danced for my nephew. He gave you three hundred bucks. You screwed him over."


I'm like *WHAT?* The guy in question, a retarded homeboy, gives me 20 bucks for a dance, then don't want another. But no, the nightmare continues. They call the House Mom, the Manager, the Make Up artist. They all testify. *You can't trust that bitch.* I cry and they tell me: "Bitch, you fucked over the owner's nephew". I cry, cry, cry. I go on the floor, and the guy is gettin' a dance. I stand between him and the titties, and I tell the bitch, don't dance for this fucker. I tell the prick, you a fuckin' cock, I gonna ruin you, you fuckin' dead. My life turns over. The club is busy busy busy. The owner is like, Why you talkin to my man? We know you a liar, I'm like, "cause you all Cocksuckers. My visa comes through, I'm pissin', I'm shittin' on you all, hello page fuckin' six..."

They ruined my night. I went home early. I can't work 'cause they took my money for 'lying'. I cry on the doorman's shoulder. I'm a good girl. I dance good. I play the the rules. I tip more than I should. And they fuck up my night.

Baby, I get it, a voice is a fuckin' whistle in the rain. They're dead. I'm cool. And you know what makes me happy? They think they know better. You know what makes me sad?

Until I prove otherwise, they're right.

Judge me, yeah do it. Live my life, you watch a Cambridge girl turn ghetto. Fun hey?

MIMI IN NY | 4:12 AM | 

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2005

Diamond and Desire

"So this is, like, my second week here."

Desire gazes at me soulfully, flicks her long, permed hair over her shoulder and fiddles with her electric blue crocheted bikini.

"What kind of clients do you get? What girls work here?"

"Oh we have, like, Trinidadians, Spanish girls, African-Americans, Eastern Europeans. You know. The guys are, like, Mexican."

"You Mexican?"

"Nooooo! I'm Puerto-Rican!" She looks at me indignantly and giggles. I think she's about 17. Her friend, Diamond, smiles shyly, and they wave, grinning, when we leave.

I went out on a reconaissance mission to find a strip club and some girls for the documentary tonight. The proposal process is a slow one. We need to seek out and assess the clubs, meet the girls, liaise with the Director and Producer, shoot some preliminary footage, then decide where the story lies, before we even attempt to tap HBO etc for funding. The story's in the girls, it's always going to be in the girls. We hit Queens tonight, covered six stripclubs around Flushing and Jackson Heights. After dealing with predominantly Manhattan establishments when trying to organize photoshoots in the past, I was pessimistic about success. Manhattan clubs are tight. Manhattan clubs are in the know. That's another way of saying they're

'connected'. I cannot use the M-A-F-I-A word, because, as one contact informed me, "Mimi sweetheart, you're advertizin' your fuckin' ignorance baby". Manhattan clubs are, in short, impermeable, unless you're willing to pay them an extortionate amount of cash and guarantee glittering publicity. An in-depth look at the lives of illegals working in the sex industry would not, for example, entice Scores into trading in its glitzy Page Six image for the humanitarian one, as, after all, Jenna looks far better in a thong than Sting. Manhattan clubs are also clean, amazingly clean, and despite the infiltration of illegals into Flash Dancers, in contrast Hustler, Penthouse, Scores and Privilege religiously screen their dancers for working papers, and drum into the girls the constant threat of getting hit for prostitution if they choose to indulge that one fat wallet's kinky whim. Girls who work in Manhattan are lucky. The girls who work in Queens - they're downmarket, shall we say.

Our first stop was a Go-Go bar. The girls dance in bikinis on a stage behind the bar, but do not perform private dances, and entertain mainly Albanians and Americans. Isobel, a slim Brazilian girl, used to work in VIP, but left because she couldn't cope with the contact. "It is disgusting, this lap dancing. Here I make the money, not so good, but no contact. I tell them I will date them and they believe me, and come back every day, until Poof! One day they're gone." Isobel came over on a tourist visa and married an American. They now have a five year old daughter together. "Most girls, they come for their three months, go back with money. Some stay, and become illegal, and save the money so they can get married. My cousin got married. Is five thousand before papers, extra five thousand after papers arrive. Expensive." The researcher I was with chatted to a shy blonde Croatian girl who had come over to the States on her three month visa waiver to earn money to pay for her studies. The girls in this bar were lucky. The atmosphere was relaxed, pleasant, balloons and flowers adorning the bar for one dancer on her way back to Rio. The girls were paid cash to be there, plus whatever tips they earned - unlike me, they had no house fee. Doubtless I earn better money, but these were illegals who had gotten wise. They had stories to tell of the past, but for the future they were content.

We headed over to a strip club in a converted garage on the side of a busy road. The girls sat on a battered sofa looking tired and worn, as two men sipped Budweiser disconsolately. Tony, the guy in charge, smiled at us warmly. "You guys missed out, Nickels woulda been a great place to film. The stories about that club! they said the Manager had, like, a secret door, he pushed the guy and girl in, and bang! No wonder it got busted for prostitution and drugs."

I smoke a cigarette outside and speak to one dancer, her breasts sagging sadly through transparent lace, her face etched in lines.

"*Esta bien aca?*"

"No. *Mierda.*"

A car pulls up and a young woman steps out, her expression already used and worn. The driver swaggers into the club and slaps Tony on the back. Tony looks warily at the woman.


"How old is she?"

"She's 36 I swear!"

The woman disappears into the back. I look at the researcher, and we step into a cab and head over to the Boulevard where we meet Diamond and Desire in a small, characterless bar owned by a young African-American with a huge Afro. Our fourth stop is a larger club, younger, funkier, slightly down-trodden, an atmosphere similar to Lace in midtown. The managers welcome us with open arms yet again, and the process is repeated in our final stop, a new club owned by two Greeks.

All of the clubs we had visited were comprised of a mixture of Americans and illegals. They talked more openly when they knew I was a dancer, their faces cleared with recognition when I told them where I worked, and some looked envious. I was - *am* - still lucky in my workplace. I do not work in a garage with men drawing up in strange cars with sad looking women, where people warn you not to turn the corner alone after 8pm. I do not work in a Go-Go bar whispering lies to lonely Albanians while I extract their dollars, dimes and nickels. I do not work in a club where the clients are young homeboys with their bling and their attitude. I have a feeling this documentary will take up a lot of time and a lot of emotion. But I also have

a feeling these stories, hidden deep in the boroughs, are waiting quietly, patiently, with fortitude, to be told.

MIMI IN NY | 2:07 AM | 

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2005

Frequently Asked Questions

1. I came to New York to complete an internship and freelance for newspapers, with the eventual aim of gaining sponsorship so that I could stay in the US and start my writing career. My failure to do exactly as planned has led me on... well, let's say an *interesting* journey into the New York underworld and the seedy underbelly of immigrant life. I don't regret it, but neither is my life as joyous, entertaining and satisfying as it could be. My intention was never to put a finger up to the immigration system by working when my present visa restricts this, but I guess that's the way it's turned out.
2. I started stripping in Flash Dancers in midtown Manhattan two months after filing my visa application, when my money ran out and my internship ended. I did not take up the other internship I was offered because the visa I needed for this did not arrive in the projected processing time.
3. I'd never danced before, and a part of me enjoys the glitz and the show. All of us dancers are attention whores - this does not mean we appreciate perverts, gropers or the hygienically challenged.
4. There is no sex in the Champagne Room. Well, not with me anyway. I have never had sex with a client in the club, although I did date a man I met in the club, the autistic Eton, who is still one of my closest friends in Manhattan. This is more to do with the fact that I have few close friends in Manhattan than any reflection on our relationship. The strip club is the sex industry, but I have learned to evade demands for jiggy-jiggy with some dirty talk and a close dance.
5. I do not use drugs, and I rarely drink outside work. However, drinking is an aid to dancing. When I'm making money, I drink.
6. I pay tax. Most illegals pay tax. They do this by using a social security number prohibited for working, or a fake social security number. Over 83 billion dollars a year are contributed to the IRS by illegals - illegals are able to pay taxes, but cannot file for tax returns. Essentially they can put money into the system but not take it out.
7. My income fluctuates drastically, depending on whether I have a lucky night with a few Champagne Room visits, or a sparse evening doing multiple lap dances on the floor. I am not rich, and I do not spend all my wages on frivolous designer items, although I look forward to embracing consumerism in the future.
8. My parents know what I do, and whilst not thrilled, are resigned enough not to nag me and trust that this is a temporary situation.
9. I have a plan for the future which does not involve dancing and does involve writing journalism, fiction and non-fiction, and working on a documentary focusing on illegals working in the New York sex industry.
10. I lost my sense of humor somewhere around May. Go read the first few months and you'll see what I mean.
11. Life is difficult, and no I'm not happy, but I truly believe I'm on the way out of this situation, and that soon I can do what I intended to do - start a career, settle down, make friends and enjoy life. This belief keeps me going in hard times.
12. I don't regret anything, and I refuse to apologize for working illegally. I don't believe this country owes me a living, but I think the system is in desperate need of reform and as a country founded on immigrants, there should be more opportunities for non-Americans to contribute and learn from it. I don't intend to give up my UK citizenship, and in the future I will

probably end up living between New York and Europe, spending my future husband's vast disposable income on first class flights and villas in Portofino.


13. I applied for my new visa in April, the projected processing time was 4-6 weeks. It arrived after eight months. I was always 'in status' in the States, but prohibited from working, and I was unable to leave the country until my visa application was accepted or rejected. I now have a restricted visa which allows me work in certain limited areas.

14. I enjoy sex and have the sex drive of a 16 year old boy. Unfortunately my particular brand of perversion coincides nicely with the autistic ex, so that now I am missing him far more than I should. Aside from hard-core chains and clamps which fail to interest me, I've never been tied up, and I missed out on the late 90's trend for fisting. It's nice to think that at 26, I still have some sexual aspirations.

16. I'm not dating, simply because I don't have the time or the energy to sit restrained in polite conversation, feigning interest and knowing that the process has to be repeated at least three times before I even get a whiff of a shag, lest haste label me a dirty girl. Anyway, I talk to men and get paid for it. Why would I waste my spare time giving out freebies?

18. I will not reveal the name of any club I currently work for because I've lost too many jobs by being 'discovered' (See The New York Times article). I don't go under the name of 'Mimi' outside the blog, and although I appreciate the offers, my dancing stays inside the club. I have no wish to moonlight in hotels however much you are willing to pay. I am not Belle de Jour, and although I have no qualms about exchanging sex for money, it will be at my initiation, and with someone I know intimately already. (Thanks for the money Eton!)


Any other questions?

MIMI IN NY | 10:02 AM | 

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2005

The 5am crawl

...started at 4am today. Exhausted from yesterday, I had a satisfying, but not fruitful night. "Last week one of you girls got 10 grand from a client. It's gonna get busier in the club now, we're coming up to the season. We're all gonna make money." Oh god help me, I don't think my liver can take it. I leave early, and creep into a cab. We're in the same business, dancers, cabbies. We pay to be there, we scour the streets for our victims, we take them the long route to make as much money with as little pain as possible. Manhattan at 5am is beautiful. In London the streets are paved with vomit. In Manhattan at 5am they're crawling with my people, the immigrants, the survivors. My bagel vendor yells at me every morning when I get home, "You work too hard!". We all do honey. We all work too damned hard just to live. And in some ways, it makes me more of a New Yorker, despite the fact that I still get my Franklins and my Jacksons confused, and my accent hovers somewhere mid-Atlantic.

MIMI IN NY | 4:27 AM | 

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2005

Meltdown

I knew I'd been a bad girl when I woke up wearing an unfamiliar g-string with a thousand dollars in twenties scattered around me.

The evening went something like this:

8-10pm : Tortured telephone conversation with the ex. 'Blame' has now been transferred to me, for being a psycho-bitch with a penchant for tragedy and crisis every few days. That's probably pretty accurate.


10.30-Midnight : Downed three large glasses of white wine with a large, greying Irish businessman. Offered relationship advice: dump the secretary, go back to the wife, and get a bitch on the side.

Midnight-1am : Champagne Room with a four foot 10 ginger businessman with an extraordinarily large cock. How do I know? He flopped it out. Urgh. Ah me, when will they learn? More wine.

1am-3am : More wine.

3.30-4.30am : Champagne Room with a bizarre creature who removed all his clothes, pranced around naked and became quite offended when I refused to give him a blow job.

I can't quite piece together the parts in between, but they involved 5am phone conversations with Ady's voicemail and creepy, gibberish text messages to myself. Last night I was indestructible, and incredibly drunk. I deal with emotion by partying, rejection with seduction, pain by travel, and life hurts. Numb it with alcohol and money. I'm leaving for a mystery location next week. I have to get out of the city. I need mountains and clean air and pure, distilled solitude. What I have is a dead feeling in my soul, a parched, dry mouth and 50 Benjamins in my bed.

MIMI IN NY | 6:03 PM | 

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2005


9/11/05

"We stayed open on 9/11" says Mike, the Pussies handyman. "We had 12 girls, and got 12 bottles that day. People came in and they wanted to talk. Typical Barry, stayed open in the face of tragedy. Well it worked. We made money, even then."

What kind of person wants a lapdance when the city is disintegrating around him? My God it doesn't bear thinking about. Yet this is who our clients are, the biggest spenders. The lonely, the troubled, the sad, the traumatised, the perverted. Sometimes you're more of a psychologist than a sex worker. You learn to tease secrets and worries out of people. You learn because the more you make them talk, the less you have to do, and the bigger tip you get. The clubs are open tonight my friends, you can flock there and pay 20 bucks for your beer, 20 bucks for your lapdance. But I won't be there, not tonight. A lapdance is so much better when the city is crying, perhaps. We thrive off misery in the strip club industry. But tonight I think the city will be sleeping uneasily, too uncomfortable for the shallow comforts of a stranger's flesh.

I moved clubs. More upmarket, a little bit of travel for me, but my clients are mainly bachelors and rich playboys, women in giggling groups curious to see what a strip club is all about. It's a happier environment, less tragic, less perverted, less sordid than Pussies, full of glitz, show and beautiful people. But the sad and the lonely are still there, hiding. I haven't been in The Champagne Room yet, so I am doubtless still to meet them. I'm adapting to my surreal, nocturnal world, starting work at 8pm, sometimes finishing at 5am, sleeping until 2pm. The money's not great yet - I've forgotten how to flirt (clue: alcohol). But I'm surviving, surviving.

And the city? It faltered as anyone would after 9/11, but it too is surviving. Like the club, it feeds off misery, fuelled by the hollow consolation of revenge, a fabricated war to soothe its pain.

MIMI IN NY | 3:42 PM | 

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2005

Cool Britannia

Let's make the stakes even here....

England, oh England, my fair isle in the North sea with terrible weather, peopled by pear-shaped women, men with bad teeth and sporting a particularly inept rail system. Here is my ode to you, my country, Cool Britannia...

1. Open those bars later.

Restricted in our valuable drinking time, we Brits have a frenzied and insatiable urge to get as many pints down us as is humanly possible between the hours of 6pm and 11.30pm. Afterwards, we pour curry down our necks, initiate brawls in the street and end the evening lying in a pool of our own vomit - and this is a good night out. Take advantage of those licensing laws, open pubs later, pace your drinking, and leave the curry for a sober night!

2. Join the EMS

Britain is fucking expensive. Don't believe the politicians when they tell you that the Euro is a dark and sordid plan to hand our sovereignty over to Germany! Get rid of the sterling so we can pay less for a packet of fags! It's currently more expensive to take a train from one end of the country to the other than it is to fly across the Atlantic to visit your friends in New York. Ask why that is...

3. Blair

What can I say? A consistent disappointment. Our leader of Cool Britannia made everyone pay university fees, making higher education accessible only to the elite. He raised council taxes. He embarked with zeal on a foreign policy he himself didn't *quite* understand. And he spent so much time with his tongue up Bush's bottom that he forgot to attend to the delectable Cherie, so that her tortoise-like face now appears everywhere, desperately craving the attention so sadly denied her by darling Tony. Get that woman a vibrator, stop pretending you're a Liberal, and take less freebie holidays. We don't care if you're the type of guy we could have a pint with down the local. We wanted a leader, not a drinking buddy. Stop trying to pretend you're not a posh git. Oh dear god.

4. Xenophobia

Will someone please shoot the tabloid parrot churning out the same old crap about asylum seekers and dirty foreigners flooding into our country and leaching off our benefits system. Most of them are here because the situation in their home country is, well, pretty crap - maybe we didn't help them out as much as we could have. So let them contribute, give them jobs. There really isn't as many as you think there are. And quite honestly, most people in Cool Britannia don't give a fuck about you, tabloid parrot. They're too busy glugging pints to care what color, nationality or ethnicity their next door neighbor is.


5. Politics

Goddammit, it's so bloody boring in the UK. What party? Who? They're *different*? I couldn't tell. Get some debate going. Start polarising those opinions and giving voters something to think about.

6. Extremists

Oh dear. Tony, Tony, Tony. It wasn't very clever to invite all those hard core Muslim extremists over to prove how tolerant you are, then go and shoot a Brazilian tourist by accident, thinking that he may have been involved in the July 7th bombings. A little bit silly really. Remember - prevention is better than cure. No one likes the crazies, why were you laying out the red carpet for them? Tut tut. There are many more followers of Islam than these extremists - why didn't you befriend these instead?


Oh Cool Britannia, the image is looking a little jaded, a little tarnished. Once great, still struggling to be, and yet failing miserably. Let's concentrate on our successes people! That famed English humor! Fish and chips! Our impressive outcry (ignored by dear Tony) against the war in Iraq! The fact we *always* get our towels on the sunbeds before the Germans! Our innate sense of tolerance towards religions and ethnicities! We *can* be cool, and we *can* be great. We're just, at the moment, not very much of either...

MIMI IN NY | 12:34 PM | 

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 02, 2005

My Lefty Family

My brother and his wife left Portland, Oregon, to go to the West Bank to perform plastic surgery on Palestinian burns victims yesterday morning for several weeks. I wish them all the luck in the world. I'm, well, kinda proud about it. At 5am after dancing all night, it's good to have something, and someone, to feel proud about.

MIMI IN NY | 4:53 AM | 

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 07, 2005

America, America

America, I have tried to comprehend your people, but I have failed miserably. After several Pinot Grigiots and consultation with some native Londoners, I have formulated a few minor suggestions you could adopt to improve international relations.

1. Get Laid

Throw 'The Rules' out the door! Drink some beers! Chat up the pretty girl/hot young male specimen standing at the bar, take him / her home, turn her over and fuck her from behind / grind him like a bitch! In the morning, throw him / her out, and do not exchange phone numbers. Ever. A fuck is a fuck. Let us embrace casual sex without consulting the dating bibles, Stephanie Klein's website, or our fifth grade bible study class.

2. Get Drunk

Become inebriated, do not fight it, revel in the sheer joy of unmitigated excess and alcohol induced stupidity. That Prada bag was just made to be left in the cab home and feed a Pakistani family for the next four months, those Manolos just begging to be puked over.

3. Assume Responsibility

Admit your leader is a retarded cunt! We failed New Orleans in their time of need! The war was not a great ideal! You voted, perhaps, *wrongly*. We all make mistakes. Stop excusing, start rectifying.


4. Visit a stripclub

And take your wife! Revel in the ta-ta and enjoy the titties! Some people choose to make money this way, contribute as you would to your friendly waiter at the local Brasserie.

5. Perspective

America, you may be bigger than me, but you ain't all that. Learn a foreign language, speak to a person of color, venture outside your state occasionally, read the BBC website and turn off Fox news and CNN. Perspectivize.

America, oh America. I despair, and yet I'm still here. We come in droves, hoping to be accepted, to make a difference, to change things. But we're one voice among many, and sometimes (shock! horror!) we're different. Embrace us. Become the famed melting pot of diversity we all hoped you would be. And go fuck that girl at the bar, and don't give her your number. Please do. It might just change your world view a little.


MIMI IN NY | 7:27 PM | 

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 06, 2005

Katrina Victims



An image to keep reminding us. As if we could forget.

MIMI IN NY | 4:52 PM | 

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 05, 2005

The Gray Area

"I used to believe in romantic love, and now I know there's a gray area in between where infidelity can exist and a relationship can still stay healthy" SM looks at us, and we nod. We're all older now. Once there was a time when we were convinced that love meant one person forever and ever... but now you accept reality, live with that.

We all used to believe in romantic love. We cried at the first guy who dumped us, he was 'the one', life cannot go on anymore, we played REM continuously and made ourselves sick with dramatic hyperbole. How could he end it so soon, too soon? In two weeks we had become so close! How could he stop short the infinite possibilities inherent in allowing those two weeks to follow their natural path - monogamy, best friends, babies, happy forever? Then we got over it. Did it again with someone else. *Life is not worth living without him!* Oasis and acoustic B sides, over and over, tears etc.


Whatever.

Then we learn what's meant to be is meant to be, and struggling *against* the facts. reinterpreting them to suit our ideals, doesn't make it any easier. I dance for lonely men, men who feel neglected, men who need the feigned affection and artful wiles of the dancer. Sometimes I dance for the ones who want to have fun, sometimes, sometimes. Very rarely. I met Eton because he was one of these lonely men. He had forgotten, he said, what it was to know the scent and touch of a woman, and he wandered in off the street one day. I danced for him, he touched me, and we kissed. I got into trouble for that. Later, a week or so later, he came back for me. I wonder sometimes, if true fidelity ever exists, because we all cheat with our minds, entertain notions of fucking that person, the person we shouldn't, the person who's out of bounds. The truest relationship I ever had was with a married man. He could never cheat on me, because he was already cheating on me. I'm like a man. I miss the sex most. I miss the scent of it, the messiness, when you revel in someone else's juices, when you lick parts of them hungrily, with relish, with slow, unhurried enjoyment, with completeness, with care. I know you can have 'technically' good sex like this. You can have sex with un self-conscious abandon with a stranger, it can make you climax, it satisfies a deep, dark side of yourself, insidious and twisted. I like that sex. It's different to sex with someone you care about. We had both, strangely enough. What Eton lacked in the emotional area, he made up for in the sack. It was different, sometimes it was gentle, sometimes rough, sometimes it was messy, perverted, twisted, soft, moist, I always came. I would have done anything in bed with him, and we did most things. But when he withdrew from me emotionally, I looked around for sex elsewhere. Not even for emotion, I looked for sex, and yet the sex with him was already enough. I can never understand that, the incongruity. I stopped looking, and became absorbed in my problems, and in him. I should have kept looking.

Is it cheating if you think these things? If you imagine fucking someone other than your partner? Is it cheating if you go and see your favorite dancer every week behind your wife's back? Is it cheating if you use porn? Prostitutes? Indulge in a little telephone sex?

I want to be with someone who understands me completely, who watches porn with me, who fantasizes with me, who shares his darkest, filthiest desires with me. Yet there's always a part of someone you can never touch, own, vigilantly police for signs of straying. It's theirs, leave it to them. The gray area? I believe it exists, in this dark place you can never entirely comprehend in another. But I believe it doesn't come into play until you've tired yourself out in your own relationship, but you're in love, and seeking to keep that love alive, not destroy it. "You don't understand that it meant nothing to me," says Eton. Oh yes, I understand. I understand all too well the distinction between sex and emotion. It has become my livelihood, and we dancers exacerbate the gap in order to keep ourselves sane. But Eton's gray area? It wasn't a lack he was supplementing, it was greed, an indulgence, a desire for more than he already had.

What I don't understand is how he could ever have expected that gray area to become black and white for me.

MIMI IN NY | 10:55 PM | 

All About My Mother

We're sitting in Central Park South, just below the Golden Monument, and sun trickles through the leaves. September is the best time to be in New York. September, when you're young, free and the weather's good. SM and Jools have been up all night clubbing in Chelsea. I can't keep up with those girls. The only partying I do is when someone's paying me to be there, or picking up the tab. A choice between a social life and a Manhattan apartment, I'm taking the fucking apartment. They exude whiffs of alcohol and stale smoke, but look remarkably perky for having pulled an all-nighter. I arrive in the middle of the second round of coffees and politics.

"Mimi knows what she's on about! Answer this question Mimi."

Roosevelt, an enormous black bouncer who Jools and SM happened upon in some Manhattan club at around 4am this morning, grabs me.

"This hurricane thing. I wanna know. Is it like a race thing? 'Cause I'm thinkin' it is, but you know, I'm black, maybe I'm jus' bein' paranoid. Maybe Bush was just being, kinda inept."

I pause and grab a cigarette.

"Well, let's think about it: 67% of the population in New Orleans are black. The mayor requested Federal assistance and an evacuation program several days before the event. The government had been aware of the risk for several years but hadn't taken action or released the appropriate funds. International aid was quicker on the scene than your own government. Yet the government couldn't act fast enough when it was one brain-dead white woman in Florida. What's that saying to you?"

Roosevelt releases a deep, rumbling laugh, and Lisa, who publishes and peddles an African-American newsheet called Black Circle, yelps and gives me a high five.

"Lord! Thank *you*! I was thinkin' this! But I thought maybe it's a color thing, maybe I'm jus' biased."

Three white girls from England, one enormous black bouncer from Brooklyn, and a Mom. We sit there, and of course we talk racism, we talk politics, we talk sex.

"You know my son is a convicted felon" says Lisa. "We had this big free party at The W on Broadway, it was goin' real good. So the next weekend my son and my niece go down there to hang out. Next thing I know, I get a phone call at 2.30am. My son's been arrested. I gotta go all the way up to the West Side, and I'm prayin'. First I was blessed 'cause I got the phone call. Then I get there and I dunno what to do, so I have to go over to the courthouse. I'm at the courthouse, an' I see all these Jewish guys, lookin' real manicured, with yarmulkes and the curls an' stuff. So I go over to 'em, and I ask 'em for help. They get out all their wallets an' I

say *no*, I don't want money, I want *help*, my son's arrested. I dunno what to do. So this one guy is a Rabbi, an' he's a Mason, so he speaks to the judge who's also a Mason, an' my son got off on ROR. He's still a felon, but he got off. That was the second time I was blessed that day."

"What the fuck he do?" says Roosevelt.

"He was in the W wi' a stolen handgun."

There's a whistle around the table.

"But it's his first offence, aged 26, so I got him out. You know what he had to say about it? 'Mom, they arrested me in front o' Fat Joe! Fat Joe saw me gettin' arrested!', I'm like, 'Son, he ain't liftin' a fuckin' hand to help your black butt, forget about Fat Joe!'. It's all about the mother, you know? It's all about the mother. I made sure he never went down that path again, cause we poor, and we black. I always made sure he knew not to hang out in Brooklyn when he was growin' up, to come to Manhattan"

Roosevelt intervenes.

"Manhattan's safe, you gotta understand. It's neutral. People don't bring their guns to Manhattan. Now the shit that goes on in Brooklyn... I was in The Tunnel when I was like 16, listening to Kid Capri, an' all these people started leavin'. I'm thinkin' with my cock, I don't wanna go. There's women, you know? I'm hangin' with the cats, havin' a good time, and my friends are like 'C'mon, get outa here'. Next thing I know this cat gets his brains blown out. Everywhere. Brains on the fuckin' floor. *That's* Brooklyn."

"How did you turn out normal?" says SM.

"My Mom. I remember one time I get home real late after hangin' out wi' the cats. I'm like 12, hangin' out with these older dawgs. And my Mom, she goes crazy. She gets the belt out, and starts whuppin' me. An' then she can see it ain't havin' no effect 'cause I'm already like 180 pounds, so I hear her go into her bedroom, and there's this CRACK! She's gotten this big old dilapidated dresser, and she's torn a big chunk offa it, and she runs out and whups me wi' that. It's all about my mother."

Attention turns to me. I tell them the story about Eton. Lisa shakes her head.

"Baby, he's tellin' you it was the worst kiss he ever had 'cause he didn't get laid. If he hadda done, would he ha' said that?"


Roosevelt interrupts.

"Everyone wants to try black women, there ain't nothin' wrong with that. I had a thing about white women. I still like 'em. Everyone disses me, they're like 'why you hangin' out with that white pussy?'. Whatever. But baby, you gotta cut loose. You can't sit around and wait for him to do that to you again. 'Cause he will. OK, I played around some before, but I made damned sure my woman never found out about it. You gotta show some respect. He gotta show some respect to *you*."

Lisa chimes in.

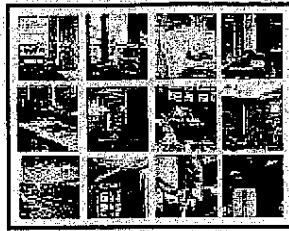
"My son, he only goes wi' Hispanics. I get what you're sayin' baby. It's hard to cut out the feelin's. It's hard."

She gives me a smile, the morning drifts to a close, and we wander off down Broadway. Roosevelt lifts me up into a hug to say goodbye like I'm a sack of sugar, a piece of lint, nothing, and twirls me round. They disappear to catch the PATH back to New Jersey, and Princeton. It's a beautiful day. It's the kind of day which makes you feel blessed. It's a day you want to share with someone. But I haven't found that someone. And you know what? Right now, that's OK.

MIMI IN NY | 3:36 PM | 

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 04, 2005

the good life



Blurry eyed and wiping away the sweat of other people at 9am on Friday, start writing, start calling, start researching. I'm working with an independent film company on a project tracing the lives of immigrant/illegal dancers in the US. My job is to find the club, find the dancers, work with them, and help make a film. I will be in it. I like the fact my mess of a life has somehow transformed itself into, well, not perhaps the *greater* good, but something more. Something more. In the meantime I dance for me, the bank of me, the survival of me me me. Thursday I turn up at 7pm, paint myself into a stripper, fill in the gaps with fake eyelashes, liner, powder, heels, dress, the smile peeled-off-the-packet and plastered on from somewhere so remote I didn't even know it existed. Work until 4am, walk home and steam drifts out of the paving slabs, dissipates. It's empty when I get home. I'm swallowed up by a fitful sleep. Blurry eyed and wiping away the sweat of other people at 9am...

Jules Corporate Bitch interrupts my research with a text message. *Sitting by the pool at the Gansevoort. Just ordered a cocktail. Come.* I am the typical poor friend and relative who leaches off others, but what the hell, I go. Cosmopolitans and beautiful people, pools and fake titties, PradaPradaPrada, all the best looking men are gay. My kind and generous friends, Jules Corporate Bitch and SM PR whore, are incredibly successful career women in the UK. We graduated within a year of each other. I used to avoid my Cambridge peers because I felt inadequate as I continued chasing a dream, not living in a reality which paid the bills and gave you security. But somehow it doesn't feel like that anymore. SM looks wistful as we gaze at the sun setting over New York. "I'm successful, but PR wasn't what I wanted to do. I wanted to act". Yet doesn't success trick you into being true to yourself? Perhaps PR was her true calling all along. Or perhaps they got swept up into something which sidetracked them for life. You can't accuse me of that. I was born to be a stripper. I don't think so, not really. I was born to do something else, and incredibly my fuck-ups have helped me. Film darling. Case in point. There's a book in me somewhere, already conceived, waiting to be born. I'll have a birthing pool, whale music, a Margarita on the side and a ciggie in one hand. It will be an exquisitely beautiful birth.

We retire to their suite with Champagne and musings on life, and the elite and the privileged wander below our balcony window. Are we ever where we want to be in life? We make ourselves happy, but there's always something more. The moment, the here and now, stinks I have to admit. You'll find out why. Keep reading. But not that night, when everything's beautiful and we live the New York Dream. Onto Pastis, lobster and rose wine, Eton joins us and looks terrified at being surrounded by three drunken Cambridge girls. We laugh horsily as Lindsey Lohan creeps past with a small entourage, and avoids anyone's eyes, lest she is (oh horror of all horrors) *recognized*. Now Sarah Jessica Parker acted with far more decorum when I saw her two weeks ago outside the Time Warner Center. And Patrick Swayze. Yes, I'm name dropping. I didn't ask for an autograph, I still have my pride. Stumble out of Pastis, bellies full of lobster, stretched taut against our skimpy clothes, into a cab, and off to BED. Unfortunately our (my) navigational faculties fail us, and we end up in Spirit.

I am too old at 26, too old, and if you've ever been to Spirit, you'll know why. The good life sours when you begin to regret your youth and that last bottle of Champagne, so I leave before it curdles. As it is, the good life feels fresh, clean, full of promises and emits alluring sniffs of seductive future paths lined with roses, and all that crap. Eton met my friends. He made an effort. I loved him for it, and crawled around on Saturday afternoon where we ate each other up and kissed fiercely and made love which was more than sex, and I know the difference, I am an expert, a purveyor of sex: it has become my livelihood. Wet, gentle, it slides more easily, places fit and bodies slot into each other with shivers of delight, and it feels better than even the first time. I think, could I be mistaken, is that... *emotion*? Oh stop. I left for work at 8,